

BUMED Oral History Project
Rear Admiral William R. Rowley, MC, USN, Ret.
Synopsis and Glossary

Date and Location of Interview: 10 June 2014, Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, Maryland

Interviewers: Mr. André B. Sobocinski and COL Richard V.N. Ginn, USA, Ret.

SYNOPSIS:

Rear Admiral William Rowley, MC, USN, was born in Omaha, NE on June 7, 1943 and raised in Owatonna, a small town in Minnesota, where he graduated from the Owatonna High School in 1972. His father, Robert K. Rowley was an engineer, his mother Dorothy L. Rowley, was a homemaker, and he has two siblings, Timothy and Thomas. He entered the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, as an engineering student, but having decided to become a physician, he changed his major to psychology, completing his B.A. in 1966. He earned his M.D. in 1970 at the University of Minnesota Medical School. He married Eileen Murray Rowley of Freeport, NY on August 11, 1968, and they have three children, William Robert Rowley II, Jeffery Pearce Rowley and Jill Christine Rowley.

Attracted to Naval service, he joined the Navy ROTC while an undergraduate, but dropped out when he changed his major to psychology. However, in 1971 he enrolled in the Berry Plan, the military medical scholarship program that was in existence from 1954-1973, and upon graduation from medical school was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy. He completed a year of internship and one year of residency at the medical school of the University of California, San Diego, This was followed by a utilization tour from 1971-1972 aboard the USS *Tripoli* (LPH-10), engaged in minesweeping off the coast of Vietnam. He describes this assignment as a formative experience as a Navy medical officer. "I learned a hell of a lot more being at sea for a year than I'd have learned being in a hospital."

The following fifteen years were devoted to clinical practice, initially from 1973-1979 as a resident in general surgery at the Naval Regional Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA, and from 1973 to 1979, as fellow and staff surgeon in peripheral vascular surgery, Naval Medical Center, San Diego, CA; and in 1980 to 1986 in clinical leadership roles at NMCS as Branch Head and Director, Peripheral Vascular Surgery Fellowship. From 1985-1987 he was Chair, Department of General Surgery and Director, Residency Programs; and from 1987-1988, Assistant Medical Director for Medical Services.

The next phase of RADM Rowley's career from 1988-2000 was distinguished by positions of increasing responsibility in executive medicine positions, initially as Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations, Naval Medical Command, Southwest Region, followed by Deputy Commander, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD; Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton, CA; Deputy Assistant Chief for Health Care Operations, BUMED, Washington, D.C.; Assistant Chief for Plans, Analysis and Evaluation, BUMED, Washington, D.C.; Commanding Officer, Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, VA, and Lead Agent for TRICARE Mid-Atlantic Region; and from 1988-2000, Fleet Surgeon, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; Command Surgeon, U.S. Joint Forces Command, and Medical Advisor, Allied Command Atlantic, Portsmouth, VA. Since retirement in 2000 he has been affiliated with the Institute for Alternative Futures, Alexandria, VA, currently as a Senior Fellow.

KEY FIGURES

Bono, Raquel Cruz, M.D., RADM, MC, USN, Surgeon, Pacific Command, 2011-2013; in 2015, Director, Defense Health Agency National Capital Region Medical Directorate and Chief, Navy Medical Corps

Cassells, Joseph, M.D., RADM, MC, USN, 1933-2003; served as Deputy Special Assistant to the Surgeon General for Education and Training (1975-1977) and later as Special Assistant to the Surgeon General for Professional Matters (1977-1978).

Hagen, Donald F., M.D., VADM, MC, USN, Ret.; Surgeon General, USN, 1991-1995

Hunter, Christine S. M.D., RADM, USN, Ret.; from 2006-2009, Commander, Navy Medicine West and the Naval Medical Center San Diego; from 2009-2011 Deputy Director, Tricare Management Activity. Upon retirement in 2011 she joined the Office of Personnel Management as the OPM Medical Officer.

Sturtz, Donald L, RADM, MC, Ret., Commander, NNMCC, Bethesda, MD, 1984-5.

Taylor, George Peach., Jr., M.D., Lt Gen, USAF; Surgeon General, USAF, 2002-6.

Weightman, George, W., MG, MC, USA, was relieved of command of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) on 1 March 2007 in the wake of allegations of neglect of wounded warriors; in a highly unusual step, he was reinstated in a two star command as Commander, US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command in November 2007, and retired from active duty 31 March 2009.

Wilson, Almon C., RADM, 1924-2003, Deputy Surgeon General, US

Navy, 1982-3; interviewed by Paul S. Stillwell,
*Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Almon C. Wilson, Medical
Corps, U.S. Navy (Retired)*, U.S. Naval Institute, 2002.

KEY WORDS

Berry Plan
Defense healthcare facility planning executive medicine
field hospital planning, futures
graduate medical education and training
"Gucci" health care facilities
hospital administration
hospital ship planning and utilization
medical officer shipboard duty
Hospital Corpsman duty and training
JCAHO -- military hospital survey results
leadership and leadership training
Military Health Systems Review
military medicine, Navy Medicine
organization of Defense healthcare
organizational change
population health
Quadruple Aim
servant leader
unification of DOD medical support
USS *Tripoli* (LPH-10)
Veterans Administration bureaucracy
"world class" healthcare and facilities; definition of